

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 332

By Pody

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Gilbert Graves upon the occasion of his posthumous induction into the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame.

WHEREAS, agriculture has been a cornerstone of Wilson County since the county's founding in 1799, and those citizens involved in farming have always been a vital part of the community; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly specially recognize those outstanding citizens who dedicated their lives to promoting the importance of agriculture in our society; and

WHEREAS, one such estimable individual was the late Gilbert Graves, who has been posthumously inducted into the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame for his hard work and commitment to continuing the legacy of the family farm in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, born on his grandparents' farm in 1932, Gilbert Graves was the son of Grafton L. and Clara Bell Hamblen Graves and was raised on the family farm on Central Pike near his paternal grandparents, Edgar and Essie Philpot Graves; he later built a house on his grandparents' farm and lived there until his death; and

WHEREAS, farming since an early age, Gilbert Graves milked cows before going to school every day and tended to his uncle's farm, which he later came to own. The farm was originally established by his fourth great-grandparents in 1816 and became a certified Tennessee Century Farm in 2002; and

WHEREAS, a graduate of Mt. Juliet High School, where he was a four-year member of the FFA, Mr. Graves went to work for AVCO in 1950 while continuing to farm and bought his first tractor, a used 1948 Ford; and

WHEREAS, in January 1955, Gilbert Graves was joined in holy matrimony with his beloved wife, Mary Lou, and a week later, he was inducted into the United States Army for military service; he spent the next two years as a Military Policeman stationed at Fort Knox, Kentucky; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Graves accepted a position with Southern Tire Service in Nashville after completing his military service and embarked on a highly successful career in sales that lasted for more than fifty years; and

WHEREAS, respected and admired by his fellow citizens, Gilbert Graves entered the field of public service in December 1965, upon winning a special election to serve as magistrate for the 25<sup>th</sup> District of Wilson County; and

WHEREAS, retaining the seat in the August 1966 regular election, Mr. Graves was the youngest member of the Wilson County Court and served on that august body until 2010, when he retired as the oldest member of the Wilson County Commission; and

WHEREAS, a champion for Wilson County's farm heritage and history, Gilbert Graves played an instrumental role in the purchase of the land for the James E. Ward Agricultural Center; and

WHEREAS, during his forty-five-year tenure on the Wilson County Commission, he served for many years as Chairman Pro Tempore and as a member of a number of boards and committees, including the Planning Commission, the Road Commission, the Agriculture Management Committee, and the Joint Economic Development Board; and

WHEREAS, a lifelong member of Center Chapel Church of Christ, Mr. Graves was a member of the Mt. Juliet Breakfast Rotary Club, Big Brothers of Mt. Juliet, Wilson County Farm Bureau Board of Directors, and Wilson County Fair Board; and

WHEREAS, the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame honors those dedicated citizens who committed their lives to developing and maintaining the highest standards and principles in their chosen vocation, and it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly honor the

memory of Gilbert Graves for his valuable service to agriculture and the farming community;  
now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
CONCURRING, that we hereby honor the memory of Gilbert Graves upon the occasion of his  
posthumous induction into the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame, as we reflect fondly  
upon his many contributions to upholding the agricultural traditions of Wilson County and the  
State of Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared  
for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.